



STATE SENATOR **Wayne Kuipers**

30TH SENATE DISTRICT E-MAIL UPDATE



Legislation Restricting Funeral Demonstrations Sent to Governor

Legislation requiring that a permit be obtained to be able to demonstrate outside a funeral home, cemetery, mosque or synagogue while a funeral or memorial service is taking place is heading to the Governor's desk. Senate Bill (SB) 1199 establishes that local units of government require protestors to apply for and be issued a permit in order to demonstrate outside a funeral. However, a permit would not have to be issued if the service is held on private property. In addition, the local unit of government may charge a fee for the application and issuance of a permit.

Senate Votes to Protect Children from Sexual Predators

Legislative Republicans voted on key bills this week that would help protect children across Michigan from sexual predators. Joining them in support of the legislation was Mark Lunsford, father of Jessica Lunsford, a 9-year-old Florida girl who was kidnapped, raped and murdered by a convicted sex offender.

The package would provide that certain repeat sex offenders (who target children) to be sentenced to life imprisonment without the possibility of parole. Senate Bills 709, 717 and 718 would require repeat offenders convicted of criminal sexual conduct in the first degree to serve a life sentence without a chance of parole if their victim(s) was/were under the age of 13. Michigan's version of *Jessica's Law* would provide a minimum of 25 years in prison with lifetime parole for anyone 17 years or older convicted of sexually assaulting a child under 13.

The Senate Committee on Judiciary unanimously approved Jessica's Law, while the House of Representatives passed SBs 709, 717 and 718.

Live Healthy, Pay Less

Michigan residents who live healthier will have the opportunity to pay less for health insurance under legislation passed by the Senate this week. Insurance companies will be allowed to create health incentive programs that reward healthy behavior with lower insurance rates.

Senate Bills 848 and 849 will allow insurers, HMOs and non-profit health care corporations to offer wellness coverage and provide premium rebates for participation. Currently, health insurance companies, unlike life, home or auto insurance carriers, are forbidden by state law from offering incentives for good behavior.

Rising health care costs have taken their toll on every sector in Michigan, including businesses, schools and state government. This has forced employers to drop health coverage, require employees to pay more, or lay off workers. A recent Altarum study found that Michigan, when compared with selected benchmark states, ranked second highest in obesity, sixth highest in smoking, highest in coronary heart disease, and second highest in diabetes. The bills now go to the House of Representatives for consideration.

Senator Kuipers and Habitat for Humanity Partner for Event

Please join Senator Kuipers and JP's Coffee and Espresso Bar in supporting Lakeshore Habitat for Humanity. On Saturday, May 20, from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Senator Kuipers will be serving coffee to earn tips for Lakeshore Habitat for Humanity. All donations will assist in building homes for families in West Michigan. JP's is located at 57 East 8th Street in Holland.